

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 MUSCAT 00515 280856Z

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W

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P R 280555Z APR 76

FM AMEMBASSY MUSCAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2068

INFO AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

S E C R E T MUSCAT 0515

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, MARR, MU, UK, US

SUBJECT: MASIRAH ISLAND

1. FOREIGN MINISTER ZAWAII ON APRIL 27 ASKED IF I WOULD FIND OUT
WHAT IS THE PRESENT USG POSITION ON USE OF MASIRAH ISLAND, WHICH
SECRETARY KISSINGER HAD BROUGHT UP WITH SULTAN QABOOS IN JANUARY
1975. ZAWAII SAID HE IS ASKED NOW AND THEN BY NEWSMEN WHATEVER
HAPPENDED TO THE U.S. REQUEST, AND IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO LEARN
WASHINGTON'S POSITION ON IT NOW. I UNDERTOOK TO GET SOMETHING FOR
HIM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, AND IN ANY CASE BEFORE MID-MAY WHEN I WOULD
BE LEAVING FOR WASHINGTON CONSULTATION.

2. COMMENT: IS WORTH NOTING THAT THIS IS THENFIRST TIME I RECALL
HAVING BEEN ASKED ABOUT MASIRAH BY ANY OMANI OFFICIAL SINCE MATTER
SURFACED IN WASHINGTON OVER 15 MONTHS AGO. CAN ONLY GULSS AT WHAT
REALLY PROMPTED ZAWAII'S SUDDEN INTEREST IN QUESTION, AND MY GUESS
WOULD BE THAT OMANIS HAVE SENSED THAT BRITISH SOON WILL BE GIVING
THEM NOTICE OF THEIR DEPARTURE FROM MASIRAH AIRBASE AND THESE-
FORE ARE STARTING TO THINK ABOUT WHERE THIS LEAVES THEM --
PARTICULARLY ON MAINTENANCE OF BASE FACILITIE' -,\$)8;3)8#99\$ 9*
9.-,8 8)-\$334 \$303,\$3,5 9 , '9? 285# 4-*.

3. LAST "IF ASKED" GUIDANCE I HAVE ON MASIRAH QUESTION WAS IN
75 STATE 247257 AND OBVIOUSLY IS PARTLY DATED IN VIEW OF VARIOUS
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US-UK EXCHANGES IN PAST SIX WEEKS OF WHICH DEPARTMENT HAS KEPT

ME INFO MED. WOULD WELCOME DEPARTMENT'S GUIDANCE FOR REPLY TO
ZAWAWI'S INQUIRY. (I WOULD PLAN TO RESPOND DIRECTHBO HIM, BUT
IN EVENT MY LONG-STANDING REQUEST FOR AUDIENCE WITH SULTAN QABOOS
COMES THROUGH SOON, AS I NOW HAVE REASON TO EXPECT, THERE MAY
BE SOME MERIT IN TALKING ABOUT THIS WITH THE SULTAN.)

WOLLE

SECRET

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: PFOR, MASIRAH, MILITARY BASE CLOSINGS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 28 APR 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MUSCAT00515
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: RR
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760162-0235
From: MUSCAT
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760414/aaaaalhw.tel
Line Count: 67
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <10 SEP 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MASIRAH ISLAND
TAGS: MARR, PFOR, MU, UK, US
To: SECSTATE WASHDC JIDDA LONDON TEHRAN
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006